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Chairman: Mr. KRENKEL (Austria)

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AGENDA ITEM 95: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 95: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued) (A/47/80-S/23502, A/47/82-S/23512, A/47/210, A/47/312-S/24238, A/47/344, A/47/375-S/24429, A/47/378, 391, 471, and 564)

1. Mr. JAAFARI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the international community recognized the problem of narcotic drugs as one that affected all countries, transcending national borders. The report of the Executive Director and the statements by delegations showed how serious the situation was as a result of the escalation of the drug problem and the negative impact of the production, marketing and abuse of drugs. Beyond the projections for the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, the General Assembly had at its forty-sixth session approved various resolutions on international drug control, all having to do with the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and intended to ensure greater international cooperation so as to facilitate the impementation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP).

2. The Syrian Arab Republic believed that all must share the reponsibility for that fight and form a common front against the scourge of drugs and the concomitant social and economic problems, so as to put an end, as well, to the illicit arms traffic, money laundering and other similar evils. All such efforts must be based on respect for the principles that had guided the United Nations in its fight against the abuse of and illicit traffic in drugs and on greater international cooperation under such conditions as might be established through bilateral and regional mechanisms. He drew attention, in that regard, to the Cartagena Declaration of 1990 and the San Antonio Drug Summit of 1992.

3. The Syrian Arab Republic welcomed the opinions reflected in the Secretary-General's report (A/47/471) and particularly those related to an integrated strategy taking into account various options for increased economic and agricultural development of poor areas whose livelihood was derived from drug cultivation, as well as the "debt-for-drugs" swap concept, aimed largely at converting the official bilateral debt of heavily indebted producer countries into local currency debt, the servicing of which would be set aside in a national fund for alternative development.

4. The Syrian authorities were working closely with all specialized Arab and international mechanisms for the fight against drugs and had participated in various regional and international forums on the subject.

5. The drug problem was global and there were no differences between producer, consumer and transit countries. The Syrian Arab Republic was a transit country, but the political decision to put an end to that evil was very firm, not only on the internal level but also internationally. The Syrian Arab Republic was a party to the 1961, 1971 and 1988 United Nations Conventions.

(Mr. Jaafari, Syrian Arab Republic)

6. The Middle East had suffered for a long time from the Arab-Israeli conflict, since Israel had denied the Palestinian people its legitimate rights. Therefore, the area yearned to achieve a just and lasting peace on the basis of the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations, to achieve development, to raise its people's standard of living and to put an end to the threat of drugs. In that connection, he emphasized the excellent coordination between the Syrian and international drug control authorities.

7. Mr. MAZLAN (Malaysia) said that the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continued to pose a serious threat to mankind despite the efforts being made at various levels. Poppy cultivation, which had been concentrated in Asia, had spread to Latin America, resulting in an increase in heroin addiction. At the same time, the newfound freedom and democracy in Eastern Europe had opened new markets for drug traffickers, creating serious problems for those countries and the rest of the world.

8. The illicit drug trade was not only causing numerous social problems, but also threatening the human race because of the relationship between drug abuse and AIDS and also posed a threat to the environment because of uncontrolled jungle clearing to provide land for poppy and coca cultivation. Worse still, the drug trade was more and more linked with crime organizations, and the wealth they obtained from it had enabled them to threaten and destabilize legitimately elected Governments. It was also known that drug money had been used to finance the illegal international arms trade and terrorist organizations that could threaten international peace and security. The international community could not be complacent in its fight against those evils.

9. Malaysia welcomed the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and fully supported its important resolutions and decisions and congratulated it on its achievements. As a member of the Commission, Malaysia would continue to play a constructive role to enable the Commission to carry out its duties. At the same time, it urged the Commission to cooperate with other drug control activities within the United Nations system and welcomed its decision to cooperate actively with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

10. A year earlier UNIDCP had been established to integrate and coordinate the functions of the International Narcotics Control Board, the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. That restructuring had resulted in more effective United Nations coordination. At the international level, drug abuse control must take the form of a multisectoral effort and must take into account the activities of other international organizations and the United Nations regional bodies. Even so, all United Nations agencies should on their own look at the drug abuse dimension of their functions and bring their experience to the Programme.

(Mr. Mazlan, Malaysia)

11. Many innovative approaches had been taken by UNIDCP since its inception, such as dialogue with the World Bank and other regional development banks to encourage introduction of a drug dimension in their lending activities; such initiatives should concentrate on helping member countries to overcome the drug problem and not on exerting pressure on Governments to force them into undertaking programmes that they could not afford.

12. Praise should also be given to various operational activities of UNIDCP, and in particular the establishment of a regional centre for Asia in Bangkok and the findings of the Intergovernmental Expert Group established to study the economic and social consequences of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

13. Malaysia had established a National Drug Information System, a central database for monitoring and planning of prevention programmes. Although it would be advantageous if member countries would contribute to the establishment of a United Nations information system on drugs, there would be financial implications to such a project, so that his delegation urged UNIDCP to study those implications and to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the feasibility of establishing such a system.

14. Individual countries must do their part to complement United Nations efforts in the fight against narcotic drugs, especially by reducing the supply of and demand for illicit drugs. It was essential to bring demand under control if supply was to be reduced, and Malaysia regretted the actions of some Governments in putting too much emphasis on efforts to interdict the supply of drugs when more impact could be derived from addressing the demand side through educating the people on the danger of drug abuse as well as assisting Governments to overcome the problems of poverty and economic development and, in that way, to reduce people's dependency on drug production.

15. Mention should also be made of General Assembly resolution 46/101 and all States should be urged to respect the principles set out therein. He deplored illegal measures such as the kidnapping of suspected drug traffickers in one country in order to try them in another. Such behaviour could not be condoned and could only undermine respect for international law in general.

16. His country was playing an active part in combating drug trafficking at the international, regional and national level and, although it had not yet ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, it was attempting to amend the appropriate national laws in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. His Government had taken various measures at the national level and was negotiating bilateral cooperation agreements on the matter with several countries. It was also attempting to secure more technical and expert assistance from international organizations, including the United Nations, and from other Member States.

17. Mr. OUATTARA (Mali) said that, although his country did not produce drugs, it was affected by them, including drugs that grew wild, drugs cultivated illegally in certain regions and drugs of synthetic origin, such as amphetamines and barbiturates, which came from abroad. Although domestic consumption had increased, his country was essentially only a transit route for drugs. Important measures had been taken at the national level to combat drugs, notably the establishment of a multidisciplinary national commission to direct and coordinate all activities in the field and introduce stricter laws.

18. The Department of National Security, the customs services and the police force were responsible for measures to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking and, although notable successes had been achieved in the seizure of drugs, the work of the law enforcement services continued to be limited by lack of resources. His country attached great importance to the training of anti-drug personnel and, in that connection, was extremely grateful for the assistance provided by France and the United States. An equally important aspect of his country's policy was its work in the field of medical treatment and education.

19. His Government was working actively to combat drugs, but national measures were inadequate to deal with a problem that knew no frontiers. To eradicate the scourge of drugs, concerted and coordinated action was needed at world level and, in that regard, he welcomed the establishment of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, which brought together all the Organization's structures in the drug field. He was pleased to see that the Programme's activities in Africa had focused on training professionals to help curb demand and on providing States with legal assistance. Given the crucial role of the United Nations in implementing the Global Programme of Action adopted in 1990, he felt that UNIDCP should be given sufficient financial resources to fulfil its task.

20. In conclusion, his country was firmly committed to combating drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking and supported the efforts of the international community to that end.

21. Mr. Saud AL-DOSARI (Qatar) said that, as pointed out in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 46/103, illicit traffic in drugs posed a serious threat to mankind and to the socio-economic and political systems of all States. A further cause for concern was the growing link between terrorism and drug trafficking. He therefore supported the establishment of an international court to try drug-related crimes.

22. Since all countries, either as producers, consumers or transit routes, suffered the devastation wreaked by drugs, it was vital for the international community to join forces in combating them. He therefore supported the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme established by resolution 45/179.

(Mr. Saud Al-Dosari, Qatar)

23. Although his own country had no real drug problem because its citizens respected the principles of the Koran and Islam, it recognized the gravity of the problem, had ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, and applied all its provisions.

24. One of the main factors to be borne in mind in dealing with drug trafficking was the large sums of capital involved, which were greater than those involved in arms trafficking and in many cases were used to finance mercenaries and destabilize the established order.

25. The war on drugs must be waged on a number of fronts. First, illicit trafficking must be tackled by enforcing sanctions against traffickers, including confiscation of their assets, in accordance with the relevant international instruments. Second, the problem of consumption must be tackled by using information media to launch awareness and prevention campaigns and by creating jobs for young people. Third, production must be tackled by helping the countries concerned to find substitute crops and raise the living standards of their populations.

26. In that connection, his country supported the agreement signed in May 1991 by the United States of America and Peru, the Global Programme of Action adopted in 1990 and the recent decision by the European Economic Community to open up its markets to certain South American countries.

27. Finally, the only realistic solution to the drug problem lay in sustainable economic and social development and joint efforts on the part of the international community.

28. Miss AL-KHALID (Kuwait) said that drug trafficking was a serious problem of concern to all States because of the adverse effects it had on public health, human resources and social and political systems.

29. Her country had adopted laws in all areas connected with drugs, including rehabilitation of drug addicts and strict punishment of offenders. It had also established a national committee of experts and researchers to study consumption trends, draw up strategies and devise solutions.

30. Although her country was not a transit route, did not produce drugs, and had no real domestic consumption problem, it was now threatened by drug traffic from the north.

31. Her country had signed the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the 1972 Protocol. It was now studying the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, with a view to early ratification, and was adopting measures and enacting laws in order to cooperate with the international community in the field and achieve the international goals that had been set.

(Miss Al-Khalid, Kuwait)

32. Her country reaffirmed its commitment to cooperate with all international bodies working to combat drugs, and considered that the measures they adopted should be stronger and more innovative and should include special programmes aimed at young people.

33. Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that the United Nations had pledged to save succeeding generations from the worst war imaginable: the illicit use of and traffic in narcotic drugs, a scourge which was threatening and destroying the very essence of the human being and civilization.

34. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had expanded the possibilities for international cooperation in that field. Egypt supported that instrument, as well as the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and considered that the activities of the Programme should be extended to all regions.

35. Drug-control plans and programmes of action must respect the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law, particularly the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the principle of the sovereignty of States. Moreover, in no case should drugs be made a pretext for resorting to force in order to achieve political objectives.

36. Economic and social development was one of the principal preventive measures, since a higher standard of living and better education increased the capacity of people to resist the temptation of drugs.

37. A five-year plan should be established to implement the Global Programme of Action within the framework of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse. Egypt welcomed in particular the activities of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East and hoped that it would obtain the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and to establish programmes.

38. His delegation had read with particular interest the reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/47/471 and A/47/378 and fully supported the study being undertaken by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Defence, with support from the United Nations University, with a view to assessing the economic and social consequences of illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse.

39. Egypt had implemented all the measures approved by the international community and had established national mechanisms for prevention, suppression and rehabilitation activities. Furthermore, a national plan had been prepared for monitoring the movement of chemical products that had originally been intended for medical and scientific use but which eventually entered the illicit market. Under the plan, measures had also been adopted to prevent the illicit use of drugs through educational programmes that highlighted the negative effects of drugs on the individual, the family and society.

(Mr. Eldeeb, Egypt)

40. Egypt had been one of the earliest States to enact laws against narcotic drugs, since its first law on the prohibition of the importation and cultivation of marijuana dated back to 1879. The most recent law enacted in that field took into account all relevant international provisions, including the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

41. Egyptian legislation on narcotic drugs dealt firmly with all aspects of the problem. The most important objectives of that legislation were to increase the severity of punishment, confiscate the assets of drug traffickers and impose financial penalties, while establishing a special fund and a clinic for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

42. Egypt wished to reiterate the importance of strengthening international cooperation in the fight against narcotic drugs; for that purpose, it had become a party to all legal instruments in that field. In addition, it had been a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs since the creation of the Commission. Since 1988, Egypt had been participating in the work of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East.

43. In cooperation with the United Nations, training seminars had been organized in Egypt. In Cairo a regional training institute had been established to combat drug trafficking and that institute had organized seminars and practical courses for officials of anti-drug services in North and East Africa, in cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Egypt welcomed the increase in the number of programmes and the strengthening of international cooperation in that field.

44. Mr. AL-TAI'Y (Oman) expressed satisfaction at the efforts made by United Nations agencies in the fight against narcotic drugs. Oman attached great importance to the problem of drugs, which was a threat to society. It believed that the problem required the adoption of radical measures. While the problem of drugs did not yet constitute a danger to Omani society, the authorities had adopted a vigorous attitude towards it in view of the possible negative consequences for the country if the problem was neglected.

45. The Penal Code of Oman provided for the imposition of prison terms of up to 10 years for drug addicts, and a new bill was being drafted which provided for even more severe penalties, including capital punishment, for those involved in the illicit production of or trafficking in drugs. An agency had been established with responsibility for the fight against drugs and scientific cooperation and research in that field were being expanded.

46. Oman was a signatory to all the international conventions, agreements and protocols that concerned narcotic drugs, including the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

(Mr. Al-Tai'y, Oman)

47. At the regional level, Oman participated, as a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, in the drafting of a single law to combat drug-related crimes and implemented the strategy against drug addiction that had been agreed upon by the Arab countries. It also cooperated with the Office for Drug Control in Arab countries.

48. Since narcotic drugs were a problem common to all mankind, an international solution had to be found in order to reduce both production and consumption. In addition, efforts should be made to confiscate crops and to reduce production. At the same time, drug addicts should be given medical attention and rehabilitation treatment.

49. Mr. Ebrahim AL-DOSARI (Bahrain) appealed to all States and Governments to respect the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. He welcomed United Nations efforts to implement the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the assistance given to national agencies responsible for suppressing the illicit traffic in drugs, and the progress made in implementing international instruments whose objective was to reduce the production and consumption of drugs and to establish treatment and rehabilitation programmes for drug addicts. In that connection, the activities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in that field deserve special mention, as well as the studies being undertaken on reducing the illicit drug traffic.

50. One requirement for success in that field was the strengthening of international cooperation based on full respect for the sovereignty of States and on non-interference and non-use of force in international relations, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/101. The fight against money laundering undertaken within the framework of bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements required international cooperation.

51. Bahrain appealed for assistance to drug-producing States, especially developing countries, so as to offer them other possible sources of income through crop-substitution programmes. It was also important for the media and teaching institutions to support efforts to reduce the demand for narcotic drugs in the schools. Preventive measures should be adopted which took into account the harmful effects of drug abuse on society. To that end, it was important to promulgate legislation and to set up programmes for the implementation of the relevant international instruments.

52. His delegation fully supported paragraphs 51 and 55 of the Global Programme of Action against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, in which States were requested to accede to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Bahrain was a signatory to all those international instruments.

(Mr. Ebrahim Al-Dosari, Bahrain)

53. While drug addiction was not a social phenomenon in his country, Bahrain had imposed even harsher penalties on those who engaged in illicit drug trafficking, and had adopted preventive measures in conformity with the Islamic Shariah to safeguard the health of the population. Bahrain supported the conclusion of bilateral agreements, as recommended in paragraph 54 of the Global Programme of Action, in order to put an end to illicit drug trafficking; it emphasized the importance of establishing cooperation in that area.

54. Mrs. OGUNLEYE (Nigeria) said that the seriousness with which the United Nations International Drug Control Programme had continued to implement the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs was a sign that the necessary material and financial resources would continue to be devoted to the effective control of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Her delegation supported efforts to improve the financing of the Programme.

55. Her delegation attached great importance to the question of narcotic drugs, not only because of the harmful effects which drug addiction could have on society, but more importantly, because of the negative image which drug traffickers gave her country. Nigeria had been forced to contend with that problem in the context of traffic in cocaine and opiates, imports of psychotropic substances and traffic in cannabis.

56. In 1989, her Government had established the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, which had focused its efforts on the interdiction of supply from abroad and re-export to other countries. As that task was complex and challenging, the country had been divided into six operational zones in which interdiction and investigation activities were coordinated, and officials had been stationed at international airports, seaports and frontier checkpoints. Three of the zones had become operational in 1990, and plans were under way to commence operations shortly in the remaining zones.

57. Despite the difficult economic circumstances which it faced as a result of the current global recession, Nigeria had not ceased to combat social ills, including the drug problem. In view of the international nature of drug trafficking, the significance of cooperation in efforts to combat it could not be overemphasized. Nigeria expressed its appreciation to those countries which had provided assistance in the form of training and equipment through the programme, and reaffirmed its continuing commitment to dealing with the problem, with the cooperation of the Programme and other countries.

58. Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) said that the only solution to the drug problem was a coordinated response involving joint efforts and policies, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including, in particular, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the prohibition of the threat or use of force.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

59. Fortunately, Ecuador had always been immune from the onslaught of drug trafficking and its harmful social and economic consequences. Nevertheless, the effects of that plague had begun to be felt. Accordingly, a new Act on Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances had been promulgated, under which the National Council on Narcotic Substances Control had been established. At the regional level, Ecuador had signed the Declaration of San Antonio, which had laid the groundwork for an integral strategy to combat illicit drug trafficking.

60. The Government's firm political will to implement its strict legislation had been reflected in the largest police operation of all time against Ecuador's most notorious criminal syndicate; as a result of that operation, the ringleaders of the country's chief family of drug traffickers had been imprisoned, while at the same time, the magnitude of the country's drug trafficking problem had been revealed.

61. The developed countries should provide the material, educational and financial means required to combat the drug menace systematically, and should increase their efforts to reduce demand, which was the main source of the problem. It was essential to provide the Governments of developing countries with financial and technical assistance in the implementation of crop substitution programmes and the creation of lawful and productive employment; any measures to facilitate access to the international market for exports from those countries would have a direct and positive impact on the elimination of illicit drug trafficking.

62. He emphasized the importance of a system of trade relations which would be more sensitive to the export needs of countries in which legal crops were threatened by others of an illicit nature. In a statement to the General Assembly, the President of Ecuador had noted that it was paradoxical for those countries which were the leading advocates of free-trade policies to have set up tariff barriers against States like Ecuador which, as a consequence, had to contend with enormous difficulties in obtaining access to those markets for their agricultural products.

63. His delegation supported the Mexican proposal that the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly should be resumed for the purpose of considering the current status of multilateral cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. That would make it possible to proceed to the formulation of policies which could allow for a more effective channelling of international cooperation in that area. Such cooperation and support in the area of finance and trade were essential, since the complex machinery of drug trafficking had enormous means at its disposal with which to corrupt and intimidate those responsible for implementing the decisions adopted by international organizations.

64. Although the international community was grappling with many problems such as environmental degradation, external debt, manifestations of extreme nationalism, disarmament and so on, it must remain vigilant in the fight

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

against the plague of drug trafficking, which was dealing severe blows to development, democracy, economic stability, domestic peace and human rights. Accordingly, his delegation reaffirmed its support for the Colombian President's proposal for the convening of a United Nations conference on illicit drugs.

65. Mr. SHOOGUFAN (Afghanistan) said that the Programme's new approach to the drug control issue and its important role in coordinating international activities deserved the support and appreciation of all.

66. After 14 years of war, Afghanistan had become an easy target for those who encouraged the cultivation of the opium poppy; that had led to an increase in the cultivation of illicit crops and the number of addicts. The return of 6 million refugees and 2 million displaced persons had further complicated the situation. Accordingly, measures had been adopted to fight drug cultivation and trafficking: Afghanistan had ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and a law concerning the cultivation of the opium poppy and cannabis, drug trafficking and the rehabiliation of drug addicts had been enacted. In addition, a national commission had been established to prepare a national plan to combat narcotic drugs, to coordinate the programmes and activities of the national organizations and government departments concerned and to call upon the Governments of the region, other Governments and international organizations to assist Afghanistan in its efforts, particularly, in the promotion of crop substitution programmes in the country.

67. The Office of the Programme in Kabul had reported some reduction in cultivation in certain provinces, thanks to the coordinated efforts of community leaders, the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations supported by international donors.

68. The fight against drug cultivation, trafficking and abuse and the treatment of narcotic drug addicts in Afghanistan required measures at different levels. At the national level, the Government was working on a plan to help farmers plant alternative crops; demand reduction was also important, and the Government had been carrying out a national awareness campaign. At the regional level, his country had signed two bilateral agreements, one with the Russian Federation and the other with India. At the international level, the expansion of UNIDCP offices in Kabul and other parts of the country and its projects for the future would improve the situation in Afghanistan.

69. In conclusion, he said that the present scale of the problem required sincere political will on the part of Member States and global efforts of the international community, in close cooperation with the United Nations.

70. Mr. ALI (Iraq) said that there were very few cases of drug abuse or illicit trafficking in Iraq, a situation which could be explained by social and moral considerations and by the strict legislation which enabled

(Mr. Ali, Iraq)

authorities to impose very severe sanctions. Moreover, the use of licit drugs was fully controlled.

71. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General, who had stated in paragraph 12 of his report (A/47/378) that the international fight against drug trafficking should not in any way justify violation of the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and international law. That fight must not be used as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of States or violating their sovereignty or territorial integrity. The responsibility for combating drug traffic and abuse was a collective one. International cooperation and the exchange of information on trafficking and money laundering would help to reduce that threat and to put an end to the scourge.

72. Iraq held the view that the insecurity and instability which existed in certain countries as a result of the interference by others in their internal affairs and the creation of zones where violence prevailed encouraged traffickers to utilize those zones to distribute drugs to other regions of the world. His country was a party to most of the conventions aimed at combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and had become a member of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East.

73. Mrs. ROMULUS (Haiti) said that illicit drug traffic accounted for no small share of international trade, it being estimated at over $500 billion a year. It was sad to note that that money contributed to the destruction of the human race, inasmuch as it fed wars, armed militias, financed superficially respectable businesses, and was used to bribe judges, lawyers, police and others. The phenomenon had taken on such dimensions that international cooperation had become indispensable. Collective action must be taken in order to ensure that an increasingly strong, systematic and effective effort could be sustained.

74. One must ask, however, whether the most fervent advocates of that crusade would also be willing to combat the use of tobacco and alcohol? Measures should be taken to prohibit advertising for those products, which was now directed at the developing countries and, within them, at children, teenagers and women of childbearing age. The attempt to create among children and teenagers a lifelong dependence on nicotine was unforgivable, and illegal sales of tobacco to minors were higher by far than illegal sales of alcohol and hard drugs; furthermore, they caused a higher death rate. It was essential to fight against tobacco addiction; the statistics of certain countries showed that reducing the number of smokers made it possible to reduce the death rate as well. The public health resources used for the treatment of tobacco- and alcohol-related diseases and disabilities would be enough to pay for a prevention programme, and would even offset the loss of tax revenues from those products.

(Mrs. Romulus, Haiti)

75. Far from supporting the campaign to legalize drugs, her delegation concurred with others in attaching great importance to the struggle against that scourge, provided that a sense of proportion was maintained and that, once a valid diagnosis was made, all nations took the necessary measures to support the Organization's work in that area. Consequently, it was necessary to strengthen the measures available to the United Nations for that struggle and to engage consumer and producer countries in a real dialogue.

76. In conclusion, she said that her delegation urged States to accept the proposal made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-fifth session, to the effect that forfeited property or proceeds should be contributed to the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to assist it in carrying out its mandate.

77. Mr. FONDAUMIERE (Director, Treaty Implementation and Legal Affairs Division, United Nations International Drug Control Programme) said that, in general, the strategy outlined by the Executive Director in his introductory statement met with the approval of Member States. The Programme had started to modify its work programme, particularly in the field of technical cooperation, to translate that strategy into action. Of course, the process would be gradual, as the Programme had commitments for its ongoing activities; as indicated by the Executive Director, it would be necessary to avoid abrupt changes of direction, as they could cause serious difficulties to many of the Programme's partners.

78. He wished to reiterate that paying more attention and committing more resources to demand reduction did not necessarily mean lessening efforts in other areas of activity, but rather having a more balanced approach between supply and demand reduction.

79. As was well understood by most speakers, in order to have a lasting and sustainable impact, given the limited resources available, the major international funding institutions must be encouraged to include that so-called "drug dimension" in their own policies, programming and operational activities. Similarly, bilateral donors must be encouraged to plan their activities in the drug-control field in close consultation with the Programme and host countries. It was to be hoped that both those actions would increase the level of support for drug-control programmes and their effectiveness.

80. In conclusion, he re-emphasized the need for the Programme to concentrate on the delivery of its many and complex tasks, for which it needed time, stability and political support. The Programme could not afford a slackening of its efforts, both at the national and international levels. Drug control must remain a priority or the price to pay would be dear in terms of social, human and economic costs.